



News Release

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Free Breast and Cervical Cancer Screenings Hit New Milestone *More than 95,000 screenings provided to Utah women*

SALT LAKE CITY – Since 1994, the Utah Cancer Control Program (UCCP), a joint program of the Utah Department of Health (UDOH) and Utah's Local Health Departments, has provided more than 95,000 breast and cervical cancer screenings to Utah women statewide.

A grant from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention enables UCCP to offer free screenings to women ages 50-64 at more than 45 locations statewide. Additionally, low-cost screenings may be available to qualifying women between the ages of 40-49.

Eligible women receive the following free screening services: Pap test, pelvic examination, clinical breast examination, instruction on self breast examination, and a voucher for a free mammogram.

“This program helps uninsured and underinsured Utah women get lifesaving screening exams that can detect breast and cervical cancers early,” said Kalynn Filion, UCCP coordinator. “As a result of these services, 378 women have been diagnosed with breast cancer and 351 women have been diagnosed with cervical cancer or pre-cancerous conditions.”

Studies show early detection of breast and cervical cancers saves lives. Mammography is the best way to detect breast cancer in its earliest, most treatable stage; an average of one to three years before a woman can feel a lump. Mammography also locates cancers too small to be felt during a clinical breast exam.

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Page 2 of 2 - Free Breast and Cervical Cancer Screenings Hit New Milestone

Cervical cancer screening using the Pap test detects not only cancer but also pre-cancerous lesions. Cervical cancer is highly curable and can be prevented if lesions found during the test are treated. In fact, most deaths from cervical cancer could be avoided if women had regular checkups with a Pap test.

According to Fillion, since the initiation of the Medicaid Breast and Cervical Cancer Treatment Act (MBCCTA) in July 2001, 380 women with breast cancer and 284 women with cervical cancer or precancerous conditions have received Medicaid-funded treatment through the UCCP.

For more information about the free screenings, call 1-800-717-1811.

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The mission of the Utah Department of Health is to protect the public's health through preventing avoidable illness, injury, disability and premature death; assuring access to affordable, quality health care; and promoting healthy lifestyles.